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THE VILLAGE CLOCK.

WRITTEN IN THE BELFREY OF AN OLD CHURCH.

I.

FROM here we catch its measured stroke,
 Artistic as a minstrel's rhyme:
 List to its ceaseless tick, tick,—
It is the pulse of Time!
 With every tick our seconds pass—
 Our heart-beats are the falling sands
 Within an unseen hour-glass!

II.

There is a heart in this old clock,—
 Its tongue speaks hourly to the town—
 Which has, since first it 'gan to throb
 Seen many a heart run down—
 Seen many a human clock grow dumb—
 Seen many a Life sway to and fro
 As restless as the pendulum!

III.

The chiming of these metal lips,
 Which wake such melody at IX.,
 Have rung in other ears, my friend,
 Than those of thine and mine—
 In the still grave-yard in the dell,
 There slumber hundreds who have heard
 The music of this sweet old bell!

IV.

And, when we join the group which sleeps
 So calmly in the sunshine there,
 This pulse will tick the same as now,
 And, in the twilight air,
 This bell to other, stranger ears,
 Will say the same odd words it said,
 Sweet words, to us, in other years!

V.

The swallow in the belfry high,
 Each summer time will build its nest;
 The ring-dove seek it in the storm,
 To smooth its ruffled breast;
 The busy spider in the light
 Will spin quaint fancies round the posts;
 The mournful Curfew sound at night.

VI.

The shadows on the antique porch
 Will come and go in silent waves—
 The moss will grow upon the roof—
 The daisies on our graves.
 The Clock will tick, Saint Agnes* chime
 The Sundays in,—but not for us—
 We will not heed the pulse of Time!

T. B. ALDRICH.

THE SHRINE OF THE BEAUTIFUL.

"GEDICHTE sind gemalte Fensterscheiben!
 Sieht man vom Markt in die Kirche hinein,
 Da ist Alles dunkel und düster—

Kommt aber nur einmal herein!
 Begrüsst die heilige Capelle!"

GÖTHE.

A HOLY shrine, where many pray, stands by the open mart,
 Where merchants traffic all the day, and buyers come and part.

It standeth in the public gaze, the passers heed it not,
 Nor hear the hymns of daily praise, that rise from that still spot.

Its outward shape appeareth plain, its windows lead and glass,
 And all shall peer within in vain, ere they the threshold pass.

It standeth there the same to-day, as in the ages past;
 A chosen throng go there to pray, and will while it shall last.

They who would enter it are told, the Spirit worshiped there
 Must have no homage proud and cold, but deep and fervent prayer.

But once within, how bright appears what was so dull before;
 What scenes arise before our eyes in passing of that door!

What glory gleams, in radiant streams, around the altar place!
 Each window pane, how rich in stain! what forms of love and grace!

There, saints and angels shine so bright, they seem in heaven instead;
 Here, rich to sight, the mellow light, pours on each bended head.

And many a priest from north and east, from south and west are there;

From every land are they who stand, and bow in silent prayer.

Their hymns are sung, the bell is rung, the sacred host they raise,

The censer swung the crowd among, its incense mounts with praise.

So day on day, they come to pray, in this their shrine apart,
 Which stands beside the human tide, that floods the public mart.

And this divine and friendly shrine—the Beautiful in Art,—
 Stands 'mid the strife of worldly life, a refuge for the heart!

HEIDELBERG.

SONNET.

OPPRESSED and loaded with a thousand cares,
 Unhappiest of men, I wandered on:—
 The frozen air scarce felt the unwarming sun:
 And I,—not Atlas, on his back who bears
 Prodigious Earth, seem'd more a burdened one:—
 Yet ample vestments fenced those nipping airs,
 And He, whose name is Goon, had overdone
 His mercies to me,—fed me by His hand—
 Made me a chosen and beloved one,—
 And taught me this was only Love begun
 On earth, perfected in the Heavenly Land:—
 There pass'd, just then, an unclad, suffering son
 Of penury, with friendless, rayless face;—
 Touched and rebuked, I hastened to my place.

O. B. CONANT.

* On the north side of the bell are these words: "Saint Agnes, Christened 1764."